

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) POLICY

FINAL August 22, 2023

The intention of this policy is to ensure that all emergency response personnel have approved and compliant PPE. All members are required to complete an annual physical and their *Appendix A* form must be on file with the safety office.

For entry (white tag) personnel, it is the intention of this policy to ensure that all members have two sets of structural turnout gear. This will allow for transition when the front-line gear is damaged, soiled or in need of service. This allocation of the gear will be based on response statistics and the budget each year.

PPE General Guidelines

Personal Protective Equipment covered under this policy includes:

IDLH (White PAT)

Turnout Coat and Pants, Suspenders, Helmet, 2-Hoods, 2 Pair Structural Firefighting Gloves, Safety glasses, Leather Boots, Face piece, Safety Shoes

Note – For Personal or Company purchased helmets, the following are the only types allowed: NFPA and OSHA approved leather style helmets including but not limited to Cairns N6A1, Sam Houston, Phoenix TL2 and non-leather helmets including but not limited to Cairns 1044, Cairns 1000 and 1010.

NON-IDLH (Blue Pat)

Blue Response Coats and Pants, Helmet, 1-Pair Structural Firefighting Gloves, Safety Shoes, Safety Glasses.

NON-IDLH (Silver PAT Non-Entry Fire)

Turnout Coat and Pants, Suspenders, Helmet, 1-Hoods, 1 Pair Structural Firefighting Gloves, Safety glasses, Firefighting Boots, Safety Shoes

Note – Response Gear (White Tag) shall be Tan or Black in color. EMS Gear shall be blue in color. All coats shall be marked with “BCoFD” on the back of the coat. A customized name flap shall be made available for all gear consisting of two lines of text. The top line shall be designated for individual company identification, and the second line shall be identified for member identification. Changes to name/company flaps shall be handled by using the appropriate online transaction form.

At no time should any station or individual alter County issued gear in any way. This includes any type of alteration including but not limited to changing the name on the coat or adding ladder belt loops to the pants. Modifying gear could become a liability for the individual, the station, the BCoVFA and Baltimore County.

If a company receives a grant, donation, or chooses to purchase gear, the gear must conform to NFPA 1971 standards. Logistics shall be notified of the Grant by sending an email to volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov.

All PPE, including but not limited to face pieces, and PAT tags are issued to the member and shall stay with the member should they change stations. An email should be sent to Volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov to notify logistics when a member is no longer active at a certain station. If a member moves to another station, the new primary station chief officer must send an email to Volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov and the Company Commander of the company the

person is leaving.

The Company Commander of the member's primary affiliation will be responsible for overseeing the PPE transactions/issues, including lost/stolen PPE.

All PPE issued by the BCoFD to the member will be returned to Logistics upon request by the Safety Office or Logistics within 14 days of the original request, as well as if a member is terminated, or resigns from the company.

Semi-annual in-station inspections should be performed by individual companies to detect potential problems including worn pants cuffs, torn coats, etc. All PPE must fit properly, and all maintenance records for PPE should be maintained in the respective stations. Assistance is always available from the on-duty BC/DC or Safety office to participate in these inspections. Someone trained and certified in gear inspections must handle the inspection. The safety office will regularly offer training for personnel in the station and offer annual recertification training.

A separate subsidy is available for PPE not covered under this policy. Gear covered under this policy is pending budget approval.

Proper credentials must be submitted with online transaction forms. Personnel must make an appointment at Logistics by calling 410-887-4527 for all non-urgent PPE exchanges. Anyone showing up without an appointment may be turned away.

PPE Requirements and Required Paperwork

IDLH Gear – Tan or Black

New members already trained and certified.

- White PA Tags
- Current Physical on file with the safety office
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.

Students in Fire Fighter Training Classes/New Members

Once a member has completed the Volunteer Weekend training program, or is accepted into a Firefighter Class, they may be permitted to get fitted and obtain loaner gear for training.

- Current Physical on file with the safety office
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.

Loaner PPE

If the member successfully completes Firefighter I and receives WHITE Pat Tags, they are to keep their loaner issued PPE until eligible for replacement BCoFD issued gear. Logistics will be notified to convert the tracking of the gear from loaner to issued gear.

PPE that was loaned from the Logistics Depot must be returned within 21 days of course completion/withdraw if the member does not qualify for white PAT tags.

Replacement Structural Firefighting PPE

Qualifying individuals for Replacement PPE issued through BCoFD will be

predicated on those personnel who meet all the following requirements:

- Members wearing turnout gear that has reached the 9-year-old mark or that has been deemed “condemned” after inspection.
- Must be an active riding member at a Volunteer Fire Company in Baltimore County
- Must have a current FIT test (IDLH)
- Possess white PAT tags.
- Current Physical on file with the safety office
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.

Non-Entry EMS- Response Gear- Blue

New members already trained and certified.

- Blue PA Tags
- Current Physical on file with the safety office. Must maintain a minimum of non-Entry.
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.

Students in EMT or Paramedic Class/New Members

Once a member has completed the Volunteer Weekend training program, or is accepted into an EMT or Paramedic Class, they may be permitted to get fitted and obtain loaner gear for training.

- Current Physical on file with the safety office. Must maintain a minimum of non-Entry.
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.

Non-Entry Firefighter - IDLH Gear – Tan or Black

Members already trained and certified who wish to downgrade from Entry to Non-Entry

- Silver PA Tags
- Current Physical on file with the safety office. Must maintain a minimum of non-Entry.
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.
- Must have a letter from the BCVFA and Fire Chief on file with the Safety Office approving the member for Non-Entry Firefighter Status.

Note – Until the funding is made available for the Rescue Gear it is permissible to allow these individuals to keep structural gear that is over ten years old. This gear shall never be used for interior firefighting or operations in an IDLH environment.

Repairs/Replacement/Cleaning

- All PPE requiring evaluation for repairs/replacement shall be brought to Logistics. If repairs/replacement are warranted, then loaner PPE will be provided. The individual must be present for fitting of loaner gear.
- The Company Commander or their designee should make the request using the electronic transaction system.
- A completed Form 35 (Semi-Annual Inspection Form) or equivalent form on the electronic transaction system, shall accompany each piece/garment. Turnout coats/pants must include the manufacturer tag that shows the serial number and the manufacturer date.

- The piece/garment shall also be tagged with the following information:
Member's name, Station, LOSAP number, Officer's name, phone number, email address, date. Contents should also be listed, i.e.: Coat, Pants, Gloves, etc.
- PPE which has been contaminated with biological hazards shall be placed in a red biological hazard bag. When brought to Logistics, leave bag outside in the waiting area for directions.
- PPE which is contaminated at the scene of a Hazardous Material incident shall remain at the scene until HazMat 1 or their designee is contacted for further instructions.
- When possible, PPE which is contaminated with small amounts of fuel and or dirt/debris shall be cleaned at the station first, and then exchanged at Logistics with loaner gear for additional cleaning if necessary.
- Any member in need of gear cleaning may do so at the closest company that hosts a gear washer and dryer. When washing your gear, you are required to complete the on-line Gear Tracking transaction link located on the FRA website. This log will in turn be sent to Logistics so that proper tracking can be conducted. Logistics will enter this information within Operative IQ.
- All gear which requires being sent out for cleaning must be properly tagged and can either be exchanged at logistics in person or sent through the closest career fire station. If gear is sent through the closest career fire station, an email should be sent to volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov so that they can be expecting it. Anyone handling this transaction in person will be eligible to receive loaner gear until such time as their gear is returned.

Lost/Stolen Gear

- If any PPE components of the BCoFD issued PPE becomes lost or stolen (turnout coat/pants, face piece etc.), a police report needs to be filed within 24 hours by the member.
- An email will be sent by the Company Commander via to Volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov. The email shall contain documentation regarding the events that took place and to include the police report CC#.

Helmet Reimbursement

Requests for helmets purchased outside of Logistics must be preapproved and requested by the Senior Officer to the OIC of Logistics via their BCVFA email address or an authorized email address in Operative IQ (ie: secondalarm@gmail.com) The request must include the member's name and LOSAP number for whom the items are being purchased.

Upon approval by the OIC of Logistics, the Senior Officer will receive an approval letter via email.

Only those helmets pre-authorized for purchase by the OIC of Logistics may be submitted for reimbursement and the amount of reimbursement will be equal to the current County's cost for Helmets.

A complete listing of the date of purchase, invoice number, description, quantity, cost along with copies of the actual invoices, proof of payment (canceled checks, bank statement, or bill paying service statement), and approval email shall be submitted to the BCVFA Admin office as part of the normal reimbursement process.

Fire Supply will forward an up-to-date price list to the BCVFA upon request.

SCBA Face Piece

The SCBA face pieces will be issued to individual members as outlined above under IDLH PPE. Eyeglass inserts may be obtained by completing the electronic transaction form and attaching a copy of the member's current prescription by their optometrist (within 2yrs). The prescription must include PD measurements (Pupillary Distance) as it is necessary to facilitate the accuracy of the lenses.

PATs: Personal Accountability Tags

- Tags will be approved and issued by the Fire Rescue Academy
- New PAT requests shall consist of a completed PAT application by going to the FRA website. All transactions shall be completed online. This includes submission of the PAT Photo (proper blue background) and all supporting training documents required for the requested tag.
- Change in PAT tags will require a new application and any updated documents required to fulfill the change.

PAT Tag Categories

IDLH - (White)

NON-IDLH - EMS (Blue)

NON-IDLH – Non-Entry Fire (Silver)

Requirements for White Tags-

- Current Entry BCVFA Medical Authorization Form/ OSHA Respiratory Compliance Form (Appendix A) date on file with the Safety Office.
- CPR or EMS certification (EMS Certification shall satisfy CPR requirement)
- Firefighter 1 Course Completion
- EMS Compliance Training
- Hazmat Ops or Hazmat Core Competency
- Members who ride at more than one company are entitled to one (1) additional set of White PA Tags. This is accomplished by completing the online transaction form.

Requirements for Blue or Silver Tags

- Current Non-Entry BCVFA Medical Authorization Form/ OSHA Respiratory Compliance Form (Appendix A) on file with the Safety Office.
- Silver tags over the age of 65 must have a current authorization form from the BCVFA and FC on file.
- CPR or EMS Certification (EMS Certification shall satisfy CPR requirement)
- EMS Compliance Training
- Hazmat Ops. Or Hazmat Core Competency

Safety Shoes

Procedure and eligibility requirements for new or replacement Safety Shoes:

- a. **New Members or those Enrolled in Firefighter I or EMT:** Once a member has completed the Volunteer Weekend training program, or is accepted into an EMT or Paramedic Class, they may be permitted to get fitted and obtain safety Shoes. Members enrolled in FF-I or EMT who are Medically Qualified as Entry or non-Entry on the Baltimore County Medical database shall be eligible for Safety Shoes.

- b. **New Members who are already certified:** Qualifying individuals will be predicated on those personnel who attain at least ten (18) responses in a calendar year (per NFIRS reporting) and are Medically Qualified as in Entry or non-Entry in the Baltimore County Medical database.

Requests for a first set or replacement Safety Shoes:

~~Please submit the spreadsheet from your COxxx@bcvfa.org or an authorized email address in Operative IQ to database@bcvfa.org.~~

The Company Commander should enter the request into the gear transaction form located on the Baltimore County FRA website. The following information needs to be provided:

- Name
- LOSAP number
- Confirmation of 18 responses
- Appendix **Expiration** A date

Replacement Safety Shoes:

- Members are eligible for replacement shoes every 3 years following the same guidelines above.

Communications: All follow up communications on the status of Safety Shoes being handled by Logistics shall be conveyed to the Company Commanders via their bcvfa.org email address, or an authorized email address in Operative IQ (i.e.: secondalarm@gmail.com)

1. Then you will receive an email to your COxxx@bcvfa.org from volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov who will then provide pre-authorization to obtain Safety shoes from Logistics for the qualified members. Members may then go to Logistics at (12200 "B" Long Green Pike, Glen Arm, Maryland 21057) to be fitted Monday through Friday from 0730-1500 hours.
2. If you are going as a company with more than 5 members, then please contact Logistics at 410-887-4527 in advance so they are prepared when you arrive.
3. Safety Shoe Fittings will be set-up on a Bi-monthly basis through the Logistics Division. This will be coordinated with the VP of Operations.
4. Members being fitted for shoes should bring their PA Tags (Silver, Blue or White) and wear socks that you would normally wear with your shoes.

Please note that members will be fitted for their shoes, but will not leave with the shoes, as they will need to be ordered from the vendor. Once they are received the Company Commander will be notified via their COxxx@bcvfa.org email and the member may go to supply to pick up the safety shoes.

5. To expedite delivery of station shoes, BCVFA and the Logistics division have agreed to permit Company Commanders, or their designee, to pick up station boots for members belonging to their station. It is imperative that the following process is adhered to for accountability and distribution of properly fitting shoes to members.
 - Company Commanders will be notified via e-mail when shoes have arrived for their company to include the member's name and shoe size and supply@bcvfa.org will be cc'd on any correspondence relative to safety shoes.

- The Company Commander will e-mail volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov with the date and approximate time the shoes will be picked up, providing at least 3 business days advance notice. Any scheduling conflicts will be communicated and re-scheduled via e-mail to volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov
- The Company Commanders may designate a representative to pick the shoes up from Supply; this must be communicated in advance and the designee must bring with them, each time, an email from the Company Commanders identifying the member authorized for shoe pick up. The shoes will be signed for by the Company Commanders, or their designee, and upon leaving supply the ownership of the shoes is considered transferred from Logistics to the individual member.

The Company Commander shall ensure proper fit of the shoes being distributed within their station. Logistics will only accept returns within 10 business days for shoes needing exchange for improper fit. To request a shoe, exchange the Sr. Officer shall e-mail volsupply@baltimorecountymd.gov notifying the shoes will be returned and the reason for the return. The shoes must be unworn, packaging intact, and brought to supply within 10 business days of distribution to the company. The shoes may not be sent using the driver-messenger. Ideally the member should return the shoes as re-fitting is necessary before another pair is ordered.

Additional information

In the event there is a discrepancy between a member company and Logistics or the Safety Office, an email shall be sent to the VP of operations with the appropriate documentation of the issue or concern. This will serve as the appeal process to address any issues or concerns. The VP of Ops or his/her designee will meet with the Bureau Chief of Safety or Logistics to attempt resolution of the reported issue.

Logistics shall be open for business until 7:00PM the first week of each month on a day to be determined and communicated in advance. The purpose shall be for the volunteers to conduct any business that is normally handled during normal business hours.

Anyone authorized to execute PPE transactions, or submit the electronic transaction forms, must have an "authorized" email address on file!

END